

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	Indochina	REPORT NO.	<input type="text"/>
SUBJECT	Viet Minh Elements in Kampot and Takeo Provinces, Cambodia	DATE DISTR.	12 April 1954
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1. The Viet Minh (VM) headquarters for Southern Cambodia is in South Vietnam. The VM would like to establish their headquarters in Cambodia but have not yet been able to do so.
2. The leaders of the major VM groups in Kampot and Takeo Provinces are almost all Vietnamese. There are some Cambodians at a lower level of leadership. Many Vietnamese operating with the VM in Cambodia have taken Cambodian names.
3. VM elements in Kampot Province consist of 2 bo doi's, 160 and 180, as well as numerous "popular groups". The bo doi's, both near battalion strength¹, operate out of the Cardomomes Mountains, which are in the northwest of Kampot Province.
4. Bo doi's 160 and 180 both have their own infirmaries and armament workshops. Sixty mm mortar shells made here are often quite bad; accuracy with such ammunition is poor. Grenades made in these shops have very poor delay mechanisms, often maiming the user, and mines are tricky, causing much trouble.
5. The security systems of the bo doi's are very efficient for countering penetration.
6. The VM in Kampot Province are supplied from both Thailand and South Vietnam. The route from Thailand lies along the Cardomomes to the Chaine de l'Elephant and then south.
7. Southeast of the city of Kampot and into Takeo Province to the Vietnamese border, there are several fairly well organized VM units of roughly company size which are after the pepper production of the area. This can be sold outside Indochina and is the best VM source of getting other currencies for arms purchases. The pepper is transported to South Vietnam and shipped out from there.

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8. VM propaganda in this area has been good. Cambodian peasant boys ignorant of where they fight or where Cambodia is on a world map can recite Communist propaganda tracts and Marxist phrases. This training is given in VM study groups.

1.  Comment. Probably about 700-800 men.

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